

REMARKS

The Examiner had rejected Figure 1 of the drawings on the basis that it was not denoted with an appropriate prior art legend. Enclosed is a proposed drawing correction showing the change made to Figure 1 in red. This now is believed to meet with the Examiner's objection.

The Examiner next objected to Claims 2 and 19 on account of informalities. These claims have now been amended to overcome the Examiner's objections thereto. Likewise, Claims 3 to 6 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The amendments made to each of Claims 3, 4 and 20 meet the Examiner's rejections of Claims 3 to 6 and 20 for indefiniteness.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 2, 7 to 19 and 21 to 24 as being anticipated by U.S. patent No. 5,684,797 to Aznar et al. Furthermore, the Examiner objected to Claims 3 to 6 and 20 as being obvious over Aznar in view of U.S. patent No. 5,959,972 to Hamami.

As indicated by the Examiner, the primary Aznar reference does appear to assert that an ATM connection may be changed "on the fly" from point-to-multipoint and vice versa (Column 2, lines 21 and 22). However, this statement as found in the Aznar reference does not in any way signify or imply that the change or conversion in question can be achieved without disrupting the original connection. In contrast, non-disruptive conversion is clearly stated to be one of the features of the present invention as found in the specification (page 1 at lines 17 and 18; page 2 at lines 20 and 21; page 3 at lines 9 and 10; and page 9 at lines 16 and 17). Also, this feature is reflected in the language of each of Claims 1, 9 and 15. Non-disruptive conversion is achieved by the requirement that a specific ordering of configuration steps must take place in the method of the present invention. For instance, on page 11 of the specification, at lines 20 to 25, it is indicated that the egress processing means 64 will have been properly configured to process multicast cells but that the ingress processing means is not yet instructed to change the manner

by which it processes incoming cells, such that the cells continue to arrive at the egress interface using the initial ECI_0 for the original point-to-point cross connect between target point A and counterpoint B. On page 12 of the specification at lines 13 to 16, it is explained that in a later step the egress interface card is instructed to listen to the original ECI as well as the new MCI such that all affected cells are properly switched. It is concluded as follows: "For this reason, it is important that step 100 be carried out prior to step 102."

The foregoing ordering of configuration steps is a recited feature of each of Claims 1, 9 and 15. This ordering of configuration steps is not taught or even suggested in the Aznar reference.

Moreover, each of Claims 1, 9 and 15 as now amended explicitly recites that when one of the output points of the packet switch is configured in order to additionally receive and process packets having the point-to-multipoint overhead, the existing configuration of the same device to receive and process packets having a point-to-point overhead remains unchanged (Claim 1 as amended). In other words, the device servicing the output port in question maintains its existing configuration to receive and process packets having the point-to-point overhead attached thereto (Claims 9 and 15). In the specification, this is described on page 12 at lines 13 to 16, and at page 11 at lines 15 to 20. Once again, this recited feature relates to the feature of non-disruptive conversion which characterizes the present invention. The Aznar reference does not appear to teach or suggest the notion that an initial configuration of a device servicing an output point for point-to-point packets remains unchanged as the device is additionally configured to receive and process point-to-multipoint packets.

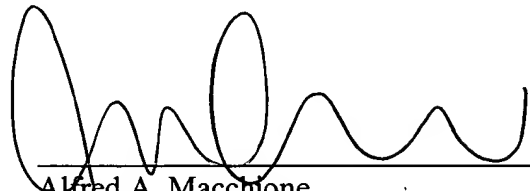
For the foregoing reasons, the Examiner is respectfully invited to reconsider and withdraw his rejection of the Claims of the present application based upon the Aznar reference whether alone or in combination with any other reference or references.

By way of the present amendment, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action in due course is earnestly requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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